

# **Tobacco Cessation Program Medication Information**

## **Nicotine Replacement Therapy**

### **What is the purpose of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)?**

Nicotine is the addictive substance in tobacco products. To assist with management of the physical withdrawal symptoms, patches and/or gum may be used.

The transdermal (through the skin) patch releases a slow and steady amount of nicotine into the body so that the body does not physically crave the nicotine.

The gum can release additional nicotine through the mouth tissue at times when the patch is not enough. This may be used during the first days of the patch therapy, and the first 24 hours after decreasing the dose of the patch therapy. When the patches cannot be used due to severe allergic reactions to adhesives, the gum may help manage withdrawal symptoms.

### **How should each of these therapies be used?**

#### Nicotine Patch

Each patch is worn on the trunk of the body for 24 hours. It is then removed and a new patch is placed in a different spot. Select a clean, dry, non-hairy part of the skin on the shoulder, back, chest, or upper arm. Remove the protective backing from the patch. Place the adhesive side of the patch next to the skin and hold the patch firmly in place with your hand for 30 seconds. Change your patch at the same time every day. Your health care provider may prescribe more than one patch.

#### Nicotine Gum

The gum is really not gum, but a square resin with nicotine inside. To release the nicotine, you must bite into the resin a few times. A peppery or burning sensation will occur when the nicotine is released. To absorb the nicotine into your blood stream, you must park the resin in your mouth between your cheek and gum tissue. After a few minutes, the burning sensation will disappear and you may again bite into the resin a few times, then park the resin in the gum tissue. If you have the desire to use tobacco, repeat this process until all the nicotine is gone. You will know it is gone when you bite on the "gum" and do not feel the tingle. Be sure to move the gum to a new place in your mouth each time you bite on it to prevent irritation to your mouth.

### **Are there any foods that interfere with NRT?**

Food and drugs act together in many complex ways. Certain foods can make medication stronger or weaker. Nicotine is known to affect the strength of some other medications. It is also known that alcohol, caffeine, and a high fat diet frequently increase the cravings for nicotine. If you are taking other medications, discuss this with your health care provider at the time you are evaluated for the patches. Your health care provider may need to adjust the dose of your other medications as you decrease your amount of nicotine. Liquids with acid in them and some foods may also increase

your need for nicotine. Avoid citrus fruits and juices and carbonated beverages while trying to eliminate nicotine.

Also, foods, drinks, and other gums will interfere with the absorption of nicotine from the gum resin. You must not eat or drink anything during the time you are using the gum. The gum does not taste very good and people often mix it with other gums, or put mints and candies in their mouth at the same time. This causes you to swallow the nicotine. **Swallowing the nicotine may cause an upset stomach. In addition, you do not get the benefit of additional nicotine in the bloodstream.**

**DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING DURING THE 30 MINUTES YOU ARE USING THE GUM.**

**What precautions should I take when I'm on the patch?**

Change your patch every day. Do not forget to put your patch on. **DO NOT USE ANY** tobacco products of any kind, not even a puff, while you are using the patches. Do not put your first patch on before strenuous activity. You may be a little light-headed and nauseated for the first hour or so. Nicotine is a stimulant to the nervous system. Many people have trouble sleeping if they put their patch on right before bedtime. Patches should be applied at the beginning of your day. Change your patch at about the same time everyday. There is enough nicotine left in the patch to make pets and children ill. Be sure you dispose of the used patches safely. Wash your hands after handling the patches.

**What precautions should I take when I'm using nicotine gum?**

Make sure you're biting into the resin briefly and then parking it in your gum tissue. **DO NOT USE ANY** tobacco products of any kind, not even a single puff, while you are using the patches or the gum. Do not use any more than ten pieces a day unless you are prescribed gum as your sole medication for nicotine withdrawal support. If you experience indigestion or become nauseated when using the gum, make sure you are not just chewing away on the resin. **This is not gum, but a resin containing nicotine to be absorbed through the gum tissue.** Nicotine is a stimulant to the nervous system. Be sure you dispose of the gum resin safely.

**What are some problems that might occur because I'm using NRT?**

There is a risk of nicotine overdose. Fainting, vomiting, diarrhea, cold sweats, blurred vision, mental confusion, weakness, headaches, drooling, sleep disruption, and heart irregularities may indicate overdose. If you notice any worrisome symptoms, take the patch off, stop use of the gum and call your health care provider as soon as possible.

Nicotine patches may also cause some discomfort. Redness and irritation at the skin site, vivid dreams, aching in the muscles and joints at the patch site, and indigestion are sometimes reported.

These symptoms should decrease as the patch dose decreases. If the skin site is gets red, or stays red for more than a day after the patch is removed, or if the area becomes tender and swollen, contact your health care provider before applying a new patch. You may also experience very vivid dreams during the first few nights while wearing the nicotine patches.

**If you continue to use tobacco while on the patch therapy or using gum, you will *NOT* successfully quit tobacco and you put yourself at great risk for overdose. REMOVE THE PATCH FOR TWO HOURS BEFORE RESUMING YOUR TOBACCO USE.** Then get out your preparation materials, redesign your quitting plan, set your date, and begin again. Not wearing the patch for more than 24 hours during your first week of therapy means you are not following the medication guidelines (other than for problems with side effects). You need to reconsider and decide if you need to enter the program at a later date when you can comply with the medication guidelines.

### **How long will I stay on NRT?**

NRT is usually prescribed for several weeks. This gives the body a chance to eliminate the addiction cycle and then to adjust to lower doses for the last few weeks. It also gives you a chance to adjust to your new lifestyle and behavior patterns without tobacco use.

### **What other information, resources, or education do I need?**

You should be enrolled in a tobacco cessation program if you are using NRT. The information, resources, and education provided in the program have proven to be essential in assisting participants in attaining successful long-term tobacco-free lifestyle.

**Additional information for patients on medication, including food and drug interactions, is available at the Nutrition Clinic and pharmacies. You are encouraged to discuss NRT questions with your health care provider, dentist, or pharmacist.**

## Bupropion

### **BUPROPION (bu-PRO-pee-on):**

**Treats depression and aids in quitting smoking. This medicine is an antidepressant.**

**BRAND NAME(S): Wellbutrin®, Wellbutrin SR®, Zyban®**

### **WHEN YOU SHOULD NOT USE THIS MEDICINE:**

You should not use this medicine if you have had an allergic reaction to bupropion, or if you have a history of seizures or an eating disorder (such as anorexia or bulimia). You should not use this medicine if you have taken an MAO inhibitor drug (Eldepryl®, Nardil®, Marplan®, or Parnate®) within the last 14 days. Do not use Zyban® to quit smoking at the same time you are taking Wellbutrin® for depression, because they are the same medicine.

### **HOW TO USE AND STORE THIS MEDICINE**

#### **Tablets, Sustained-Release Tablets:**

- Your doctor will tell you how much of this medicine to take and how often. Do not take more medicine or take it more often than your doctor tells you to. The normal directions are to take one capsule for three days; on the 4th day take one capsule in the morning and one capsule in the evening. Make sure that there are at least eight hours between your morning dose and your afternoon/evening dose.
- You may take this medicine with or without food. Swallow the **sustained-release tablet** whole. Do not crush, break, or chew it.
- You may need to take bupropion for 1 to 2 weeks before you plan to stop smoking.
- Store the medicine at room temperature, away from heat, moisture, and direct light. Ask your pharmacist, doctor, or health caregiver about the best way to dispose of any outdated medicine or medicine no longer needed.
- Keep all medicine away from children and never share your medicine with anyone.

#### **If you miss a dose:**

If you miss a dose or forget to take your medicine, take it as soon as you can. If it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then to take the medicine and skip the missed dose. Do not use extra medicine to make up for a missed dose.

**DRUGS AND FOODS TO AVOID:**

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medicine, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products.**

- . Make sure your doctor knows if you are also using orphenadrine (Norflex®), Norgesic®), cyclophosphamide (Cytosan®), theophylline, Tagamet®, levodopa (Sinemet®), diet pills (appetite suppressants), other medicine for depression, medicine for anxiety (such as diazepam, Valium®), blood pressure medicine (such as atenolol, metoprolol, Toprol®), medicines to treat mental illness (such as haloperidol (Haldol®), thioridazine (Mellaril®)), a steroid (such as cortisone, prednisone), or medicine for heart rhythm problems (such as verapamil, Rythmol®, Tambocor®).
- . Do not drink alcohol while you are using this medicine. Tell your doctor if you currently drink alcohol or use other sedatives on a regular basis.

**WARNINGS:**

- . Make sure your doctor knows if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or if you have liver disease, kidney disease, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, or mental problems such as bipolar (manic-depressive) disorder.
- . This medicine may increase your risk of seizures, especially if you have a history of head injury, seizures, brain tumor, severe liver disease, or drug addiction. If you have a seizure, do not take any more bupropion.
- . Your doctor may want to check your blood pressure at regular visits while you are using this medicine. Be sure to keep all appointments.
- . Bupropion is only part of a complete program to help you quit smoking. You are more likely to be successful if you follow all of your doctor's advice.
- . This medicine may make you dizzy. Avoid driving, using machines, or doing anything else that could be dangerous if you are not alert.

**SIDE EFFECTS**

**Call your doctor right away if you have any of these side effects:**

- . Allergic reaction: Itching or hives, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, tightness in chest, trouble breathing
- . Blistering, peeling, red skin rash
- . Muscle or joint pain, unexplained fever with rash
- . Seizures, fainting
- . Severe agitation or confusion, thoughts of hurting yourself, or other unusual thoughts
- . Severe or continuing headache, pounding in the ears
- . Yellow skin or eyes, pain in the upper stomach, dark-colored urine or pale stools

**If you have problems with these less serious side effects, talk with your doctor.**

- . Dry mouth, mild nausea, vomiting, constipation, or loss of appetite
- . Trembling, shakiness, headache
- . Mild restlessness, nervousness, or trouble sleeping

**IF YOU HAVE OTHER SIDE EFFECTS THAT YOU THINK ARE CAUSED BY THIS MEDICINE, TELL YOUR DOCTOR**

Copyright © Thomson MICROMEDEX 1974-2002. All rights reserved. This patient education document was created using the MICROMEDEX® System and may contain MICROMEDEX proprietary information.